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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/981,313

10/15/2001

Kristina Marie Burow

36-001100US

4969

22798

7590

05/25/2006

QUINE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW GROUP, P.C.

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ALAMEDA, CA 94501

EXAMINER

SODERQUIST, ARLEN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1743

DATE MAILED: 05/25/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/981,313

Applicant(s)

BUROW ET AL.

Examiner

Arlen Soderquist

Art Unit

1743

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 February 2006 and 14 March 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-74 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-74 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on 15 October 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Art Unit: 1743

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 was filed in this application after appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, but prior to a decision on the appeal. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the appeal has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114 and prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on February 14, 2006 has been entered.
2. Claims 1-74 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In claim 1 it is not clear if the sample container language of subparagraph (d) is the same or different from the sample holder in claims 2-3 and 9. Additionally, it is not clear if a plurality of transfer stations are required for subparagraph (c) since at least one of the transfer stations comprises a pin tool. It is also not clear if the transfer station of subparagraph (c) of claim 1 constitutes the at least one device associated with each of the work perimeters as set forth on subparagraph (b) (see claims 23-25) or is required to be in addition to the at least one device of subparagraph (b). Because of claim 23, examiner will treat the transfer station as capable of functioning as the at least one device of subparagraph (b) for examining purposes. In claim 2 it is not clear how the sample holders limit the claim. In claim 3 it is not clear if the one or more storage modules of claim 2 is being limited to a single storage module or if the limitation is the same if a plurality of storage modules are present. In claim 9, it is not clear if the assay holders are distinct from the sample holders of claim 2 or if the sample holder of claim 2 can also be the assay holder of claim 9. For examining purposes examiner will treat the sample holders of claim 2 as capable of functioning as the assay holders of claim 9. In claim 13, the types of sample holders appear to go beyond the scope of claim 2 since some of the types listed do not have the capability of holding a plurality of samples. It is also not clear if there is a further limitation since the sample holders do not appear to be positively recited as an element of the device. Claim 19 appears to redefine the transfer station of claim 1 and claim 20 appears to have a scope that is greater than the pin tool of claim 1. It is not clear if claim 31 is further limiting since the pin tool is found in claim 1. It is not clear if claim 57 requires two controllers or if it is a further definition of the controller of claim 1.

Art Unit: 1743

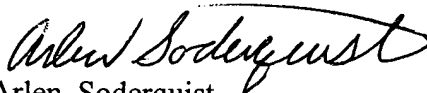
3. Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The additionally cited art teach pin tools and various apparatus for working with biological samples using the pin tools.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Arlen Soderquist whose telephone number is (571) 272-1265. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday and Alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill Warden can be reached on (571) 272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Arlen Soderquist
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1743